The Cheerful Letter

EVERY PLACE A CHURCH; EVERY DAY THE LORD'S DAY; ALL EVENTS BLESSINGS; ALL JOY THANKSGIVING; AND ALL NATURE AND LIFE FULL OF GOD.—*James Freeman Clarke.*

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THE CHEERFUL LETTER.

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JOHN G. WHITTIER.

Born December 17, 1807.

THE TRUE POET IS A PRIEST AFTER THE ORDER OF MELCHIZEDEK, FOR HE TEACHES US TO SEE DIVINE BEAUTY IN ALL OF NATURE. SUCH A PRIEST IS WHITTIER, FILLING NATURE AND LIFE WITH A SENSE OF GOD'S PRESENCE.

OUR MASTER.

Immortal Love, forever full,
Forever flowing free,
Forever shared, forever whole,
A never-ebbing sea!

Our outward lips confess the name
All other names above;
Love only knoweth whence it came
And comprehendeth love.

Blow, winds of God, awake and blow
The mists of earth away!
Shine out, O Light Divine, and show
How wide and far we stray!

Hush every lip, close every book,
The strife of tongues forbear;
Why forward reach, or backward look,
For love that clasps like air?

We may not climb the heavenly steeps
To bring the Lord Christ down:
In vain we search the lowest deeps,
For him no depths can drown.

And not for signs in heaven above
Or earth below they look,
Who know with John his smile of love,
With Peter his rebuke.

In joy of inward peace, or sense
Of sorrow over sin,
He is his own best evidence,
His witness is within.

No fable old, nor mythic lore,
Nor dream of bards and seers,
No dead fact stranded on the shore
Of the oblivious years;—

But warm, sweet, tender, even yet
A present help is he;
And faith has still its Olivet,
And love its Galilee.

The healing of his seamless dress
Is by our beds of pain;
We touch him in life's throng and press,
And we are whole again.

Through him the first fond prayers are said
Our lips of childhood frame,
The last low whispers of our dead
Are burdened with his name.

O Lord and Master of us all!
Whate'er our name or sign,
We own thy sway, we hear thy call,
We test our lives by thine.

. . . . . .

Who hates, hates thee, who loves becomes
Therein to thee allied;
All sweet accords of hearts and homes
In thee are multiplied.

Deep strike thy roots, O heavenly vine,
Within our earthly sod,
Most human and yet most divine,
The flower of man and God!

. . . . . .

We faintly hear, we dimly see,
In differing phrase we pray;
But, dim or clear, we own in thee
The Light, the Truth, the Way!

. . . . . .

To do thy will is more than praise,
As words are less than deeds,
And simple trust can find thy ways
We miss with chart of creeds.

. . . . . .

Apart from thee all gain is loss,
All labor vainly done;

The solemn shadow of thy Cross
Is better than the sun.

Alone, O Love ineffable!
Thy saving name is given;
To turn aside from thee is hell,
To walk with thee is heaven!

. . . . .

Our Friend, our Brother, and our Lord,
What may thy service be?—
Nor name, nor form, nor ritual word,
But simply following thee.

. . . . .

The heart must ring thy Christmas bells,
Thy inward altars raise;
Its faith and hope thy canticles,
And its obedience praise!

—*John G. Whittier.*

JESUS THE SAVIOUR.

In a very high and real sense, Jesus of Nazareth is the Saviour of mankind. Rightly understood, this designation of him is most appropriate and beautiful. The mischief is that the phrase has come to be invested with a significance which is misleading. "Saviour" is a Latin word; "helper" is an Anglo-Saxon word; and we are told that in the old Anglo-Saxon phrase of the New Testament, where our word "Saviour" occurs, the word "helper" did occur. Says Dr. Lyman Abbott: "I have sometimes wondered whether, if we had adhered to the Anglo-Saxon phrase, it would not have modified our theological habit." Be this as it may, we cannot help feeling that to regard Christ as the God-appointed, spiritual Helper of mankind is a much more rational and Scriptural view of what he came into the world to do than to place him in the light in which he is presented by the doctrine of the Atonement. To the present writer the designation Saviour, as applied to Jesus, has a fulness, sweetness, and preciousness of significance which he can scarcely express in words. Millions of Christians would say the same thing. Let us in a few sentences indicate what we conceive to be the true sense in which Christ may rightly be called the Saviour of the world, as distinguished from the erroneous and misguiding sense of which we have spoken.

It was a contention of Luther that the true miracle of Christianity was the creation of spiritual life in the human soul, compared with which such outward miracles as the healing of the sick and walking on the water were quite secondary and unimportant. Herein we are in perfect agreement with the great German reformer. Jesus came into the world when human society was fast dissolving in its own baseness. By his personal influence and teaching he saved civilization from perishing, and started a movement for its regeneration which, however slowly it has seemed to proceed, is unquestionably destined to be ultimately successful. If his religion has disappointed the expectations of some of his followers with regard to its achievements hitherto, it should be remembered that the conditions indispensable to its success are only now gradually coming into existence. Before the invention of the art of printing, its influence was necessarily very limited, and it had to wait nearly fifteen hundred years before the invention appeared. It had to wait about eighteen centuries before railways, steamships, and other means of bringing the peoples of the earth into close intercourse gave it a chance of extending the bounds of its activities. Keeping in mind the hindrances and disadvantages under which it has labored, the wonder is that it has already accomplished so much; and that, despite all drawbacks, it holds the leadership of the march of human destiny. If it has not yet redeemed society from all its evils and miseries, it has certainly shown that it has within itself the promise and the potency of that redemption. If to-day it has not brought mankind so great an increase of happiness as some would like to have seen, let it not be forgotten that it has saved the race from retrogression, and filled its heart with glorious anticipations regarding its future. Yes, it is by its inspirations that Christianity saves men. It inspires them with faith, hope, and love, thereby creating within them that spiritual life of which Luther speaks. It fills their souls with noble and elevating ideals and sentiments, with visions of good which will ceaselessly haunt them until they are realized in concrete fact. It has breathed into them a passion for holiness and altruism which will never be extinguished. As Dr. Channing has said, the influence which Christianity is intended to exert on the human mind "constitutes its supreme honor and happiness. Christ is a great Saviour as he redeems or sets free the mind, cleansing it from evil, breathing into it the love of virtue, calling forth its noblest faculties and affections, enduing it with moral power, restoring it to order, health, and liberty. Such was his great aim." His religion has thus become the motive power of all individual and national progress. It gives the chief impulse to the development still going on in the ethical consciousness of mankind. It

incessantly emphasizes the declaration that every nation on the face of the earth will, in the end, be measured by its spiritual value.

Putting aside for the moment all questions of technical theology, we base upon two assertions our declaration that the designation of "Saviour of the World" will never cease to belong rightly to Christ till mundane history comes to an end. In the first place, his teachings, unlike those of all other master minds, can never be outgrown, or cease to be applicable to individual and social life. Our second assertion is that, although he has departed from earth, he has, as we have shown, not ceased to inspire his followers who yet remain here; and to inspire a man, as has been finely said, is a greater service than the communication of any amount of knowledge, secular or sacred. How he possesses in his ascended state this mystical power of influencing the human spirit is one of those problems which we must be content to leave unsolved, but that he does possess it is one of those things which are unquestioned by Christian believers. His saying, "Lo, I am with you alway," has been found by his true disciples in every age, and always will be found, to be actual fact. Says Rev. R. A. Armstrong, "There is intrinsically no more difficulty in conceiving of communion between spirit upon earth and spirit in heaven than in conceiving of communion between the human soul and God." When Jesus ceased to move among men in visible form, it was but the necessary condition of his being able to come nearer to them as invisible spirit. His second coming, as we may call it, accounts for the wondrous vitality of the Church.

Summing up all we have now said, we affirm that evidence of the saving power of Christ, in the sense which we have explained, necessarily cumulates with the centuries, as does also evidence of the heavenly origin and character of his religion seen in its fruits.

"And twice ten thousand years of strife
Shall not make nought his pain,
Nor mar the harvest of rich life
His patient love shall gain."

—*The Christian Life.*

THE TRUE PRIESTHOOD.

The poet used also to be called a priest; and the true poet is a priest after the order of Melchizedek, for he shows us God in the world. He teaches us to see divine beauty in all of nature. Nature is not merely a house and farm for us to live in, not merely a picture gallery for us to amuse ourselves in, not merely a museum of curiosity for us to study; but the poet, if he be a true, divinely inspired poet, shows us our Father in everything. To him nature is full of the peace of God. He shows us in the dawn of morning the smile of God, welcoming his children to their daily work; in the gorgeous sunset he shows us God drawing the curtains of the evening; in the solemn fires of night, circling along their interminable paths forever, he shows us the majestic stability of God's great order. In the infinite varieties of plant, flower, tree, insect, bird, he shows the Divine Providence caring for all his creatures, painting the lily of the field, and marking the fall of the sparrow. And so the poet or the lover of nature becomes also a priest; and his every verse is a hymn and sacramental psalm. Such a priest was Wordsworth, sanctifying the thoughts of men wherever the English language is spoken. Such a priest is Whittier, filling nature and life with a sense of God's presence. These are the priests forever after the order of Melchizedek.

So we may find our true priests everywhere, and we may ourselves all be true priests of God. If we have in us the spirit of Christ; if we see God as our Father and as the Father of all men; if in this spirit we learn to respect and honor all God's children; if we carry in our hearts, wherever we go, an unfailing trust that God is around us, and that he is always ready to come into our hearts by the holy influence of his Spirit, —we shall find a priesthood in nature, in events, in life; and we shall carry that holy and sanctifying influence to others.

Every humble soul that sees the Father, and lives in that sweet vision, becomes a priest to other souls. A sacramental power goes from the voice, the touch, the look, of one who himself loves God. I call it a sacramental occasion when any soul full of the love of God and man strives to help another soul,—to purify, to elevate it, to bring it to God. Something beyond the meaning of the words passes from heart to heart. Something more convincing than argument, more weighty than reason, makes of that hour a sacramental hour and of that office a priesthood. The life of God flows to us through such channels. Deeper than all depth, higher than all height, the spirit comes through these human hearts to ours. When children see their parents living lives of purity, devotion, fidelity, truth, justice, honor, tenderness, what priesthood can so

lift their young hearts to God as this? Therefore, the father was of old the priest, and the king, as head of the tribe, was also its priest, traces of which customs linger through all historic records.—*James Freeman Clarke.*

THE STILL HOUR.

MY BIRTHDAY.

Beneath the moonlight and the snow
Lies dead my latest year;
The winter winds are wailing low
Its dirges in my ear.

I grieve not with the moaning wind
As if a loss befell;
Before me, even as behind,
God is, and all is well!

His light shines on me from above,
His low voice speaks within,—
The patience of immortal love
Outwearying mortal sin.

Not mindless of the growing years
Of care and loss and pain,
My eyes are wet with thankful tears
For blessings which remain.

If dim the gold of life has grown,
I will not count it dross,
Nor turn from treasures still my own
To sigh for lack and loss.

The years no charm from Nature take;
As sweet her voices call,
As beautiful her mornings break,
As fair her evenings fall.

Love watches o'er my quiet ways,
Kind voices speak my name,
And lips that find it hard to praise
Are slow, at least, to blame.

How softly ebb the tides of will!
How fields, once lost or won,
Now lie behind me green and still
Beneath a level sun.

How hushed the hiss of party hate,
The clamor of the throng!
How old, harsh voices of debate,
Flow into rhythmic song!

Methinks the spirit's temper grows
Too soft in this still air;
Somewhat the restful heart foregoes
Of needed watch and prayer.

The bark by tempest vainly tossed
May founder in the calm,
And he who braved the polar frost
Faint by the isles of balm.

. . . .

Rest for the weary hands is good,
And love for hearts that pine,
But let the manly habitude
Of upright souls be mine.

Let winds that blow from heaven refresh,
Dear Lord, the languid air;
And let the weakness of the flesh
Thy strength of spirit share.

And, if the eye must fail of light,
The ear forgot to hear,
Make clearer still the spirit's sight,
More fine the inward ear!

Be near me in mine hours of need
To soothe, or cheer, or warn,
And down these slopes of sunset lead
As up the hills of morn!

—*John G. Whittier.*

"UNDERNEATH ARE THE EVERLASTING ARMS."

When on my day of life the night is falling,
And, in the winds from unsunned spaces blown,
I hear far voices out of darkness calling
My feet to paths unknown,

Thou who hast made my home of life so pleasant,
Leave not its tenant when its walls decay
O Love Divine, O Helper ever present,
Be thou my strength and stay!

Be near me when all else from me is drifting,—
Earth, sky, home's pictures, days of shade and shine,
And kindly faces to my own uplifting
The love which answers mine.

I have but thee, my Father! let thy spirit
Be with me then to comfort and uphold;
No gate of pearl, no branch of palm I merit,
Nor street of shining gold.

Suffice it if—my good and ill unreckoned,
And both forgiven through thy abounding grace—
I find myself by hands familiar beckoned
Unto my fitting place.

Some humble door among thy many mansions,
Some sheltering shade where sin and striving cease,

And flows forever through heaven's green expansions
The river of thy peace.

There, from the music round about me stealing,
I fain would learn the new and holy song,
And find at last, beneath thy trees of healing,
The life for which I long.

—*John G. Whittier.*

THE BOOK AND MAGAZINE CLUB.

[*Send all offers and requests for this department to Mrs. W. B. Nichols, 80 Goffe Street, Quincy, Mass.*]

Please remember, when you see a request for a book in the Book Club, to write a card to Mrs. Nichols, asking, "*Shall* I send such a book to such a person?" before sending it, else the person who requests it may receive several copies. When any one writes directly to you, asking for a book offered by you, send a card to Mrs. Nichols, saying that you *have* sent it. When you receive more requests than you can meet, send these to the Book Club to be printed there.

OFFERS.

Will any one who would like to receive "Black Beauty," address Miss Langmaid, 237 Berkeley Street, Boston, Mass.?

The Cambridge Branch offers the following books. Address Miss M. A. Vinal, 20 Lowell Street, Cambridge, Mass.

Juveniles.

"Sylvie and Bruno"; "Alice in Wonderland"; "Little Women," "Eight Cousins," L. Alcott; "The Water Babies," Kingsley; "Stories of the Bible"; "Indoor and Outdoor Games"; "Holly-Berry and Mistletoe"; "The Cuban Treasure Island"; "Caps and Capers"; "Melodies of Childhood"; Lamb's "Tales from Shakespeare"; "Heidi"; "Songs for the Little Ones at Home"; "Songs for our Darlings"; "Amy and Marion's Voyage"; "Tell-Tale"; "Great Cities of the Modern World"; "When We Destroyed the Gaspée"; "Master Frisky."

Educational.

"First Book of American History," Eggleston; "Leading Facts of English History," Montgomery; Sargent's "fifth Reader"; Tancred McMurray's "Geography," first book; "The Mother Tongue, English Grammar"; "English History for Americans," Higginson and Channing; Carpenter's "Geographical Reader"; "Elements of English Composition"; Scudder's "History of the United States"; Keightley's "History of England"; Schmitz' "History of Rome."

The Brighton Branch offers the following books. Address Miss Carrie L. Murdock, 320 Allston Street, Brighton, Mass. "Book of Golden Deeds," Charlotte M. Yonge; "Child's Book of Nature," Worthington Hooker; "Swiss Family Robinson"; "Arabian Nights revised for Younger Readers," Chapman; "Lookabout Club," Mary E. Bamford; "Max Fleming"; "Under Drake's Flag," G. A. Henty; "Jack Hall," Robert Grant; "True to the Colors," Harry Castlemore; "Betty's Bright Idea" (educational), H. B. Stowe; "Elements of Natural Philosophy"; Porter's "Rhetorical Reader."

Foreign Languages.

"Meadow's French and English Reader"; "Beginner's French Reader"; "La Littérateur Française"; "Colomba," Mérimée; "Corinne," Mme. de Staël; "L'Abbé Constantin," Ludovic Halévy; "German Reader," Follen; "Easy Latin Translation Book for Beginners: Gradation," Heatley and Kingdon.

Fiction.

"Red Triangle," Arthur Morrison; "Handy Andy," Samuel Lover; "Brooks of Bridlemere," G. Whyte-Melville; "Two Lilies," Julia Kavanagh; "Phebe, her Profession," Anna Chapin Ray.

Miscellaneous.

"Woolgathering," Gail Hamilton; "Indian Question," Lieutenant Colonel Otis; "Humphry Davy, Poet and Philosopher"; "Everybody's Guide," R. Moore; "Talks on Women's Topics," Jennie June; R. W. Clarke's "Lectures to Young Men"; "Concord," George B. Bartlett; Baedeker's "London"; "Friendship's Offering"; "Mother Goose Masquerades"; "The Albany Depot," W. D. Howells; *The Musician*, 1904–05; *Saturday Evening Post*, 1905.

Poetry.

"Songs and Sonnets of Shakespeare," Illustrated; "Enoch Arden," Tennyson; "Home, Sweet Home"; "O Little Town of Bethlehem," Phillips Brooks; "Excelsior," Longfellow; "Upward"; "Daily Poems"; "Longshore"; "The Palace of the King"; and other religious poems.

REQUESTS.

Those who write to us for the first time must send the name and address of a minister as a

reference. Without that the request will not be printed.

1. *Dear Cheerful Letter Friends,*—I come again to thank you all for your kindness in the past and to ask for a continuance of same. As I have explained before, I live in the backwoods of South Georgia in what is called the Pine Barrens. We have a very good school and library. The books for the library were given us by the Cheerful Letter people, and we have for several years had a Christmas tree at our school-house for the children. We are all poor, and the children have but few pleasures, and there are so many. Our school numbers between sixty and seventy, but at present but few are going, as cotton is to pick, and even the smallest tots can pick cotton. Any books, magazines, illustrated papers, Xmas cards, pictures, anything that will please children, will be gratefully received. If they are old, they will be new to us. Mrs. J. Porter Galvin, Colquitt County, Georgia, R. F. D. 3.

2. Mrs. Hattie D. Wood, Mannsville, Indian Territory, will be glad to receive any of A. J. Evans's books.

3. Mrs. C. M. Triplett, Moscow, Idaho, asks for magazines and pictures for her three-year-old boy.

4. It has been some time since I last wrote to *Cheerful Letter*, and, as I have not had any good reading for some time, will come again asking for something to pass away the time the coming winter. Would like to receive current numbers of *Ladies' Home Journal*, also any of the following books: "Ernest Maltravers" and the sequel to it, "Alice," both by Lytton. "Rita, or the Outcast Sister," and any of Mrs. Evans's books. Any good reading will be acceptable. Mrs. Roy Thompson, Tom Bean, Texas.

5. I write to ask the Cheerful Letter friends to send some books to two poor orphan boys, Fletcher and Oscar Dodson, fifteen and twelve years. Their education has been neglected. I think second readers would about suit, or any good easy reading books and simple story books. They would be pleased with almost any kind. Mary B. Pedigo, the Hollow, Virginia.

6. Benjamin C. Knight, Enfield, North Carolina, asks for "Ben Hur" and "Ten Nights in a Bar Room."

7. Mrs. Laura A. Sanborn, Sebago Lake, Maine, will be glad of reading or cheery letters.

8. Mrs. Lizzie Ellis, R. F. D. No. 4, Harrison, Maine, living in a lonely place and confined to her bed, will be very grateful for any cheer sent her. She finds it difficult to write, but appreciates the kind letters.

9. Miss Addie E. Ballew, R. F. D. No. 1, Lenoir, North Carolina, one of our invalid members, with an invalid mother, would like very much to receive the *Ainslee Magazine* for 1906, beginning with the March number. Also would like the *Youth's Companion*, or a book occasionally. Miss Ballew writes: "I hope you will not think me greedy; but it is so lonesome out in the country, and we do not have any reading except what is sent us, for we are not able to take any papers."

10. My daughter is from home teaching, so as to go to school next year, and asks that I write to you and ask you to send her the *Ladies' Home Journal*, and any current magazines you can through the *Cheerful Letter*. She says they do not have any reading where she boards, and she misses it so much, as she is among entire strangers. Her address is Miss Christine Duval, Ashland, Virginia, R. F. D. No. 1. I would be glad of any reading for myself and little ones. Mrs. R. C. Duval, Locust Grove, Virginia.

11. Mrs. Judd King, Centralia, Indian Territory, would like *Dumb Animals* and any other good reading.

12. Mrs. William McBryar, 411 High Street, Greensboro, North Carolina, is now interested in a sort of reformatory, where the boys and girls get very little training. She would like literature and things that would please and interest children from eight to fourteen. Our members may remember Mrs. McBryar as Miss Sadie B. Waugh.

13. Mrs. John R. Hill, Bassett, Virginia, will be glad of any good reading.

The address of Mrs. James Newcomb is now 523 North Street, San Antonio, Texas.

THE MOTHERS' COUNCIL.

[Readers may remember that in the November number we promised the second part of an article, telling the method employed by a teacher, who overheard profane expressions used by one of his scholars, in breaking up this habit.]

He said nothing to the boy, and, in fact,

the boy did not know that he was overheard. He allowed a day or two to elapse, so that the conversation might be forgotten, and then took an opportunity, one day after school, when all things had gone on pleasantly, and the school was about to be closed, to bring forward the whole subject. He told the boys that he had something to say to them, after they had laid by their books and were ready to go. The desks were soon closed, and every face in the room was turned toward the master with a look of fixed attention. It was almost evening. The sun had gone down. The boys' labors were over. The day was done, and their minds were at rest, and everything was favorable for making a deep and permanent impression.

"A few days ago," says the teacher, when all was still, "I accidently overheard some conversation between two of the boys of this school, and one of them swore."

There was a pause.

"Perhaps you expect that I am now going to call the boy out and punish him. Is that what I ought to do?"

There was no answer.

"I think a boy who uses bad language of any kind does what he knows is wrong. He breaks God's commands. He does what he knows would be displeasing to his parents, and he sets a bad example. He does wrong, therefore, and justly deserves punishment."

There were, of course, many boys who felt that they were in danger. Every one who had used profane language was aware that he might be the one who had been overheard, and, of course, all were deeply interested in what the teacher was saying.

"He might, I say," continued the teacher, "justly be punished, but I am not going to punish him; for, if I should, I am afraid that it would only make him a little more careful hereafter not to commit this sin when I could possibly be within hearing, instead of persuading him, as I wish to, to avoid such a sin in future altogether. I am satisfied that that boy would be far happier, even in this world, if he would make it a principle always to do his duty, and never in any case to do wrong.

"Besides," continues the teacher, "I think it very probable that there are many other boys in this school who are sometimes guilty of this fault, and I have thought that it would be a great deal better and happier for us all if, instead of punishing this particular boy, whom I have accidentally overheard, and who probably is not more to blame than many other boys in school, I should bring up the whole subject, and endeavor to persuade all to reform."

I am aware that there are, unfortunately, in our country a great many teachers from whose lips such an appeal as this would be wholly in vain. The man who is accustomed to scold and storm and punish with unsparing severity every transgression under the influence of irritation and anger must not expect that he can win over his pupils to confidence in him, and to the principles of duty, by a word. But such an appeal will not be lost when it comes from a man whose daily and habitual management corresponds with it.

The teacher made some farther remarks, explaining the nature of the sin, not in the language of execration and affected abhorrence, but calmly, temperately, and without any disposition to make the worst of the occurrence which had taken place. In concluding what he said, he addressed the boys as follows:—

"Now, boys, the question is, do you wish to abandon this habit, or not? If you do, all is well. I shall immediately forget all the past, and will do all I can to help you resist and overcome temptation in future. But all I can do is only to help you; and the first thing to be done, if you wish to engage in this work of reform, is to acknowledge your fault, and I should like to know how many are willing to do this.

"I wish all those who are willing to tell me whether they use profane language would rise."

Every individual but one rose.

"I am very glad to see so large a number," said the teacher; "and I hope you will find that the work of confessing and forsaking your faults is, on the whole, pleasant, not painful business. Now those who can truly and honestly say that they never do use profane language of any kind may take their seats."

Three only of the whole number, which consisted of not far from twenty, sat down. It was in a seaport town, where the temptation to yield to this vice is even greater than would be, in the interior of our country, supposed possible.

"Those who are now standing," pursued the teacher, "admit that they do, sometimes at least, commit this sin. I suppose all, however, are determined to reform; for I do not know what else should induce you to rise and acknowledge it here, unless it is a desire hereafter to break yourselves of the habit. But do you suppose that it will be enough for you merely to resolve here that you will reform?"

"No, sir," said the boys.

"Why? If you now sincerely determine

never more to use a profane word, will you not easily avoid it?"

The boys were silent. Some said faintly, "No, sir."

"It will not be easy for you to avoid the sin hereafter," continued the teacher, "even if you do now sincerely and resolutely determine to do so. You have formed the habit of sin, and the habit will not be easily overcome. But I have detained you long enough now. I will try to devise some method by which you may carry your plan into effect, and to-morrow I will tell you what it is."

So they were dismissed for the day, the pleasant countenance and cheerful tone of the teacher conveying to them the impression that they were engaging in the common effort to accomplish a most desirable purpose, in which they were to receive the teacher's help, not that he was pursuing them, with threatening and punishment, into the forbidden practice into which they had wickedly strayed. Great caution is, however, in such a case necessary to guard against the danger that the teacher, in attempting to avoid the tones of irritation and anger, should so speak of the sin as to blunt their sense of its guilt, and lull their consciences into a slumber.

At the appointed time, on the following day, the subject was again brought before the school, and some plans proposed by which the resolutions now formed might be more certainly kept. These plans were readily and cheerfully adopted by the boys, and in a short time the vice of profaneness was, in a great degree, banished from the school. This whole account is substantially fact.—*Jacob Abbott, in "The Teacher."*

NATURAL HISTORY.

MACK, THE PARROT.

IV.

The spring of 1907 was peculiarly damp and cold; and, although Mack had occasional outings on the south piazza, when the sun was out and the breeze not too fresh, he felt all the uneasiness which stirs the blood of every living creature in the months of April and May, and one morning gave utterance to his discontent by exclaiming,—

"I'm a piazza parrot!"

When music lessons are going on, he sometimes forgets himself, and begins to make remarks.

"Now, Mack, you must not talk!" said one.

The response was,—

"Whew!" followed by a loud whistle. "I talk!—oh, I forgot," apologetically.

A little girl exclaimed,—

"Isn't Mack a lovely bird?"

"I am!" was his prompt response.

One day I showed him a splendid red rose, saying, "Mack, that is the color of the tips of your wings."

He looked at it fixedly, saying: "I thought it. I did not know what it was."

For several weeks he had the habit of saying, "I forgot." Rallying him on this, I remarked, "You will have to cultivate your memory."

"I don't care about it," was his quiet reply.

Among the ladies in our neighborhood he has two especial favorites, and always hails their coming with delight. One of them included him in an invitation to dinner, and after dinner he was regaled by piano playing of brilliant dance music. So excited was he with the festivities and the music that, as he was carried home in his blanket-covered cage, he sang, very sweetly, reminiscences of the strains which he had heard. He was like a gay young man, whistling and singing to himself after a happy, social evening.

Little Raymond, a small neighbor, toddled into the house one day, and asked if he might play the piano. On being lifted to the music stool, he began to touch the keys lightly, and with an evident wish to play something agreeable. It was no childish pounding, and Mack listened for a moment, then put his head into his seed-cup, saying: "I don't think I like it! I dont think I know."

For several years we had a telephone and it was, to Mack, a source of mystery and amusement. Sometimes he would try to help us in ordering dinner from the market. One day he proposed that we should order "a peck of carrots" and some "crackers," neither of which commodities were in favor with him.

A high-spirited young lady, visiting us, asked if she might telephone to a friend. Mack interfered, and made it impossible for her to hear the replies to her questions.

"Mack," she exclaimed, "you must not talk when the telephone is going."

"I'll talk as much as I want," was his saucy reply.—*Helen M. Knowlton.*

FRANCES POWER COBBE.

(Continued from last number).

I draw now to the closing years of my life at Newbridge, after I had published my first book, and before my father died. They were happy and peaceful years, though gradually overshadowed by the sense that the long tenure of that beloved home must soon end.

It is one of the many perversities of woman's destiny that she is not only by hereditary instinct a home-making animal, but is encouraged to the uttermost to centre all her interests in her home, every pursuit which would give her anchorage elsewhere (always excepting marriage) being more or less under general disapproval. Yet when the young woman takes thoroughly to this natural home-making, when she has, like a plant, sent her roots down into the cellars and her tendrils up into the garrets, and every room bears the impress of her personality; when she glories in every good picture on the walls or bit of choice china on the tables, and blushes for every stain on the carpets; when, in short, her home is, as it should be, her outer garment, her nest, her shell, fitted to her like that of a murex,—then, almost invariably comes to her the order to leave it all, tear herself out of it, and go to make (if she can) some other home elsewhere. Supposing her to have married early, and that she is spared the late uprooting from her father's house at his death, she has usually to bear a similar transition when she survives her husband; and in this case often with the failing health and spirits of old age. I do not know how these heart-breaks are to be spared to women of the class of the daughters and wives of country gentlemen or clergymen, but they are hard to bear. Perhaps the most fortunate daughters (harsh as it seems to say so) are those whose fathers die while they are themselves still in full vigor and able to begin a new existence with spirit, and make new friends, as was my case. Some of my contemporaries whose fathers lived till they (the daughters) were fifty, or even older, had a bitterer trial in quitting their homes and were never able to start afresh.

In my last few years at Newbridge my father and I were both cheered by the frequent presence of my dear little niece, Helen, on whom he doted and toward whom flowed out the tenderness which had scarcely been allowed its free course with his own children. *L'art d'être grandpère* is surely the most beautiful of arts. When all personal pleasures have pretty well died away, then begins the reflected pleasure in the fresh, innocent delights of the child, — a moonlight of happiness, perhaps more sweet and tender than the garish joys of the noontide of life. To me, who had never lived in a house with little children, it brought a whole world of revelations to have this babe, and afterward her little sister, in a nursery under my supervision during their mother's long illnesses. I understood for the first time all that a child may be in a woman's life, and how their little hands may pull our heartstrings. My nieces were dear, good little babes then: they are dear and good women now, the comfort of my age, as they were the darlings of my middle life.

Having received sufficient encouragement from the *succès d'estime* of my "Theory of Intuitive Morals," I proceeded now to write the first of the three books on "Practical Morals," with which I designed to complete the work. My volume of "Religious Duty," then written, has proved, however, the only one of the series ever published.

The plan of this book is simple. After discussing in the first chapter the "Canon of Religious Duty," — which I define to be "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thine heart and soul and strength,"—I discuss, in the next chapter, "Religious Offences against that Law,"—Blasphemy, Hypocrisy, Perjury, etc. The third chapter deals with religious faults (failures of duty) such as Thanklessness, Irreverence, Worldliness, etc. The fourth, which constitutes the main bulk of the book, consists of what are practically six sermons on Thanksgiving, Adoration, Prayer, Repentance, Faith, and Self-consecration.

The book has been very much liked by some readers, especially the chapter on Thanksgiving, which I reprinted later in a tiny volume. It is strange in these days of pessimism to read it again. I am glad I wrote it when my heart was unchilled, my sight undimmed, by the frozen fog which has been hanging over us for the last two decades. An incident connected with this chapter touched me deeply. My father in his last illness permitted it to be read to him. Having never before listened to anything I had written, and having, even then, no idea who wrote the book, he expressed pleasure and sympathy with it, especially with a passage in which I speak of the hope of being in the future life "young again in all that makes childhood beautiful and holy. It was a pledge to me of how near our hearts truly were, under apparently world-wide (religious) differences.

My father was now sinking slowly beneath the weight of years and of frequent returns of the malarial fever of India—in those days called "ague"—which he had caught half a century before in the Mahratta wars. I have said something already of his powerful character, his upright, honorable, fearless nature, his strong sense of Duty. Of the lower sort of faults and vices he was absolutely incapable. No one who knew him could imagine him as saying a false or prevaricating word; of driving a hard bargain; of eating or drink-

ing beyond the strictest rules of temperance; least of all, of faithlessness in thought or deed to his wife or her memory. His mistakes and errors, such as they were, arose solely from a fiery temper and a despotic will, nourished rather than checked by his ideas concerning the rights of parents and husbands, masters and employers, and from his narrow religious creed. Such as he was, every one honored, some feared, and many loved him.

At last the long, good life drew to its end in peace. I have found a letter which I wrote to Harriet St. Leger a day or two after his death, and I will here transcribe part of it, rather than narrate the event afresh.

NOVEMBER 14, 1857.

Dearest Harriet,—My poor father's sufferings are over. He died on Wednesday evening, without the least pain or struggle, having sunk gradually into an unconscious state since Sunday morning. . . .

Who but God knows all the kind and generous actions he has done in that half-century! To the very last he completed everything, paying his laborers and settling his books on Saturday; and we find all his arrangements made in the most perfect and thoughtful way for everybody. There was a letter left for me. It contained only a hundred-pound note and the words, "The last token of the love and affection of a father to his daughter." . . . He is now looking so noble and happy, I might say, so handsome, his features seem so glorified by death, that it does one good to go and sit beside him. I never saw Death look so little terrible. Would that the poor form could lie there ever! The grief will be far worse after to-day, when we shall see it for the last time. How wonderful and blessed is this glorifying power of death, taking away the lines of age and weak distension of muscles, and leaving only, as it would seem, the true face of the man as he was beneath all surface weaknesses, the "garment of the soul laid by," smoothed out and folded! My cousins and Jessie and I all feel very much how blessedly this face speaks to us, how it is *not him*, but a token of what he is now. I grieve that I was not more to him, that I did not better win his love and do more to deserve it; but even this sorrow has its comfort. Perhaps he knows now that with all my heart I did feel the deepest tenderness for his sufferings and respect for his great virtues. . . .

Everything is merciful about it, even to the time when we were all together here, and when I am neither young enough to need protection nor old enough to feel diminished energies. . . .

I carried out my long-formed resolution, of course, and started on my pilgrimage just three weeks after my father's death. Leaving Newbridge was the worst wrench of my life. The home of my childhood and youth, of which I had been mistress for nineteen years, for every corner of which I had cared, and wherein there was not a room without its tender associations,—it seemed almost impossible to drag myself away. To strip my pretty bedroom of its pictures and books and ornaments, many of them my mother's gifts and my mother's work, to send off my harp to be sold, and make over to my brother my private possessions of ponies and carriage, (luckily my dear dog was dead), and take leave of all the dear old servants and village people, formed a whole series of pangs. I remember feeling a distinct regret, and smiling at myself for doing so, when I locked for the last time the big, old-fashioned tea-chest out of which I had made the family breakfast for twenty years. Then came the last morning, and, as I drove out the gates of Newbridge, I felt I was leaving behind me all and everything in the world which I loved and cherished.

I was going also, it must be said, not only from a family circle to entire solitude, but also from comparative wealth to poverty. Considering the interests of my eldest brother as paramount, and the seriousness of his charge of keeping up the house and estate, my father left me but a very small patrimony, amounting, at the rate of interest then obtainable, to a trifle over 200 pounds a year. For a woman who had always had every possible service rendered to her by a regiment of well-trained servants and had had 130 pounds a year pocket money since she left school, it must be confessed that this was a narrow provision. My father intended me to continue to live at Newbridge with my brother and sister-in-law; but such a plan was entirely contrary to my view of what my life should thenceforth become, and I accepted my poverty cheerfully enough, with the help of a little ready money wherewith to start on my travels. I cut off half my hair, being totally unable to grapple with the whole without a maid, and faced the future with the advantage of the great calm which follows any immediate concern with Death. While that shadow hangs over our heads, we perceive but dimly the thorns and pebbles on our road.

A week after leaving Ireland, I spent one night with Harriet St. Leger in lodgings which she and her friend, Miss Dorothy Wilson, occupied on the Marina at St. Leonard's.

When I had gone to my room rather late that evening, I opened my window and looked out for the last time before my exile on an

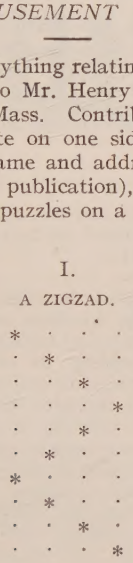
English scene. There was the line of friendly lamps close by; but beyond it the sea, dark as pitch on that December night, was only revealed by the sound of the slow waves breaking sullenly on the beach beneath. It was like a black wall before me, the sea and sky undistinguishable. I thought: "To-morrow I shall go out into that darkness! How like to death is this!"—*Autobiography of Frances Power Cobbe.*

THE AMUSEMENT COLUMN.

[Address everything relating to the Amusement Column to Mr. Henry A. Jenks, Canton Corner, Mass. Contributors are requested to write on one side of the paper only. Write name and address plainly (not necessarily for publication), and send the answers to the puzzles on a separate slip of paper.]

I.

A ZIGZAD.



1. A place to keep valuable papers.
2. A synonym for a poet.
3. A synonym for power.
4. A point of the compass.
5. A metal.
6. Reflected sound.
7. The opposite of sea.
8. Found at the seashore.
9. A synonym for a clumsy fellow.
10. A fish.

My whole is connected with the Christmas season.

II.

RUSSIAN RIDDLES.

1. Who are the two brothers that live on the opposite side of the road, yet never see one another?

2. A pack of wolves ran by One was shot, how many remained?

III.

AN ACROSTIC.

All the words described contain the same number of letters. When rightly guessed and written one below the other, the diagonal beginning with the upper left hand letter and ending with the lower right hand will spell the name of a festival.

1. A famous University of England.
2. A French Explorer and Founder of Quebec.
3. A City in Massachusetts.
4. A Historic Town in Massachusetts.
5. A County of Massachusetts.
6. A City in Pennsylvania.
7. A Holiday.
8. A Governor of Canada under the French.
9. The Seat of the United States Naval Academy.

IV.

WORDS WITH DOUBLE MEANING.

I am a flower, I am also a color.

I am a fruit, I am also to join in couples.

I am an evergreen tree, I am also to languish.

I am a hall of justice, I am also to woo.

I am one of the seasons, I am also a leap.

I am what the sun does, I am also to polish.

I am to encounter, I am also a food.

I am a large stone, I am also to move back and forth.—*Every Other Sunday.*

Answers to the Puzzles in the November Number.

I. A THANKSGIVING DINNER.—1. Turkey. 2. Gravy. 3. Cranberry Sauce. 4. Potatoes. 5. Parsnips. 6. Turnips. 7. Beets. 8. Squash. 9. Bread. 10. Butter. 11. Tea. 12. Jam. 13. Pie. 14. Pears. 15. Candy. 16. Coffee. 17. Chestnuts. 18. Ice Cream.

II. ANAGRAM.—1. Mary Chilton. 2. John Alden. 3. William Bradford. 4. Priscilla Mullens. 5. Myles Standish. 6. Gilbert Winslow. 7. Massasoit. 8. Peregrine White. 9. Remember Allerton. 10. Elder Brewster.

III. RUSSIAN RIDDLES.—1. Legs of a table. 2. Wheels of a cart. 3. A Fly.

IV. A SQUARE.—DALE.
AREA.
LESS.
EAST.

V. HIDDEN STATES.—1. Oregon. 2. Maine. 3. Indiana. 4. Ohio.

When a young man was boasting, saying, "I am wise, for I have conversed with many wise men," Epictetus said, "I also have conversed with many rich men, but I am not rich."—*Epictetus.*

THE EDITOR'S CORNER.

The Editor asks POSTMASTERS who send notices of changes of address not to send these notices to the Editor, but to the Secretary, at 25 Beacon Street, Boston, Mass.

The Editor would be very glad to receive a note or card from any reader who is willing to answer the following questions:—

Would you like to have the extracts from the Life of Frances Power Cobbe continued during the year 1908? Or would you rather have them come to an end with this number?

Is there any subject, not at present treated in the *Cheerful Letter*, which, in your opinion, it would be desirable to include?

Is there any department of the paper which you think it would be better to omit?

These questions are addressed, not to those who have an abundance of literature at their command, but to those for whose benefit the paper and the society, "The Cheerful Letter Exchange," was founded.

Can you suggest any way of making the paper more interesting?

This number has been made, so far as possible, a Whittier number, in honor of the centenary of John G. Whittier. Is this a good idea? Or would it have been better to issue a number more in the usual way?

The Editor offers several copies of a book, interesting and useful to ministers,—"Lectures on the Epistles to the Corithians," by John Hamilton Thom. Thom was an intimate friend of Martineau. For these address Miss L. Freeman Clarke, 91 Mt. Vernon Street, Boston, Mass.

IMPORTANT NOTICES.

The Cheerful Letter Exchange is developing Home Study work for the benefit of those without school facilities.

Arrangements will be made for lessons by correspondence in any school subject for those who are unable to leave their homes or who are far from centres of education.

Will those who would like to receive such instruction please send requests to Mrs. Ruth Peterson, 25 Beacon Street, Boston, Mass.

Hereafter, subscriptions to *The Cheerful Letter* should be sent to the secretary, Mrs. L. B. Porter, 25 Beacon Street, Boston, Mass. Make checks payable to Lily Blunt Porter.

Any subscriber not receiving the paper regularly is requested to notify the secretary.

The secretary may be seen at headquarters, 25 Beacon Street, Boston, every Monday, Tuesday, and Friday.

Will any who has heard lately from Mrs. F. C. Dorn (whose former address was Ponti Rock, Oneida County, New York) be kind enough to send this information to our secretary, Mrs. L. B. Porter, 25 Beacon Street, Boston, Mass.

THE ATTENTION OF ALL READERS OF "THE CHEERFUL LETTER" IS CALLED TO THE FOLLOWING NOTICE:—

It is contrary to the rules of the Cheerful Letter Exchange to allow any one to make use of our paper by addressing letters, asking for money, clothing, or other articles, to those whose names are printed in the paper. This prohibition includes requests to borrow money and the offering of articles for sale. The name of any person who infringes this rule will be dropped from our list; and any one who receives a request of this description is desired by our Executive Committee to return no answer, but to enclose the letter at once to our secretary, Mrs. L. B. Porter.

Any minister (of any sect) who receives this paper is invited to write to our headquarters (see address on this page) and give names and addresses of those who may be cheered and helped by becoming our correspondents.

No *theology* is disseminated in our paper. All the religious matter is intended merely to strengthen, cheer, and comfort those in need of such practical help.

Send requests for books and letters of thanks to Mrs. W. B. Nichols.

Chairman, Mrs. W. B. Nichols, 80 Goffe Street, Quincy, Mass.

Secretary, Mrs. Lily Blunt Porter, 25 Beacon Street, Boston, Mass.

Editor of "The Cheerful Letter," Miss L. Freeman Clarke, 91 Mt. Vernon Street, Boston, Mass.